

Message Text

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FM AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9522

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY

USMISSION USBERLIN

AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

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AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

USEUCOM FOR POLAD

USAFE FOR POLAD

USAREUR FOR POLAD

UNCLAS FRANKFURT 1566

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PINT, GW

SUBJECT: RHEINLAND-PFALZ LANDTAG ELECTION RESULTS

REF: FRANKFURT 1406

1. CDU, SPD AND FDP ALL PROFESS, WITH SOME JUSTIFICATION, TO BE PLEASED WITH RESULTS OF MARCH 9 ELECTIONS FOR PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE (LANDTAG) IN RHEINLAND-PFALZ. CDU BOASTS THAT ITS 53.9 PERCENT (3.9 PERCENT MORE THAN 1971 LANDTAG ELECTIONS) IS BEST RESULT ACHIEVED BY ANY CDU ORGANIZATION IN LANDTAG ELECTION ANYWHERE IN FEDREP, COMAPRISON WHICH CONVENIENTLY LEAVES OUT BAVARIA. SPD WITH 38.5 PERCENT (TWO PERCENT LESS THAN 1971) AND FDP WITH 5.6 PERCENT (THREE-TENTHS PERCENT LESS) ARE PROUD THAT LOSSES SMALLER THAN IN RECENT ELECTIONS ELSEWHERE, UNCLASSIFIED

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INCLUDING RHEINLAND-PFALZ COMMUNAL ELECTIONS LAST YEAR.

HUNDRED LANDTAG SEATS ARE EXPECTED TO DIVIDE CDU 55 (PLUS THREE), SPD 40 (MINUS TWO), AND FDP FIVE (MINUS ONE).

2. COMMENT: SINCE CDU GAINS NOT GREATER THAN ANTICIPATED BEFORE LORENZ KIDNAPPING, PARTY LEADERS NOW TAKING LINE THAT INCIDENT WORKED TO BENEFIT ALL DEMOCRATIC PARTIES BY MAKING ELECTORATE CONSCIOUS OF BALLOT PRIVILEGE. INDEED, VOTER TURNOUT OF 81 PERCENT (79.4 IN 1971) WAS GOOD FOR A LANDTAG ELECTION, ESPECIALLY ONE SO DEVOID OF INTRINSIC INTEREST. CONSENSUS OF EARLY, INFORMED COMMENT WAS THAT STRONG CDU PERFORMANCE STRENGTHENS MINISTER-PRESIDENT KOHL'S CLAIM TO CHANCELLOR NOMINATION BUT WAS NOT CONVINCING ENOUGH TO CLINCH IT FOR HIM ATTENTION WILL NOW TURN TO SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN ELECTION NEXT MONTH. FDP SURVIVED EXPERIMENT OF PRO-CDU COALITION PLEDGE, WHICH MANY OBSERVERS BELIEVE HELPED SPD. A STRIKING FEATURE OF RESULTS WAS THAT CDU GAINS AND SPD LOSSES GREATEST IN CITIES, WHERE UNEMPLOYMENT GREATER THREAT, WHILE SPD HELD OWN AND EVEN SCORED SOME GAINS IN RURAL, CATHOLIC AREAS.HARLAN

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